The Jerseyman

Three Saturdays in November

Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer

Earlier in this issue I reported to you about the success of our fundraising efforts to purchase signal flags to dress the ship. When we took the flags down after July 4th they were stowed away below deck waiting for the next occasion to hoist them. That occasion turned out to be Veterans Day, so we planned to hoist the flags on Saturday, November 8th. In the previous article I also mentioned that our fund raising efforts had brought in more money than was needed to buy the two sets of Signal Flags. After buying the flags, 1,000 feet of new carrier line, various quantities of two different types of carabineers, and several hundred wire ties, we still had about $5,000 left over. Since the funds had been raised to dress the ship we wanted to make sure that money was spent for that purpose. With that in mind we established a small committee to explore the possibility of purchasing LED lights to be hoisted on the wires when the flags weren't flying.

We did some research on LED bulbs and stringers and came up with an estimate to purchase four 330' long stringers, with sockets spaced every 15". The estimate also included purchasing 664 white bulbs, an additional 664 colored holiday bulbs (red, yellow, green, orange and blue), and various other supplies to create the light strings. LED bulbs aren't cheap, the ones we bought are $2 each, but they consume less than 1/2 watt a piece while still putting out as much light as a 7 watt incandescent bulb. They give off virtually no heat and have an estimated 60,000 hour life. The total estimate came in less than the money remaining so we decided to make the purchase. The strings and bulbs we bought were enough to allow us to run strings of lights on both the fore and aft wires and also to decorate the discone antenna on the bow to look like a Christmas Tree. Hoisting holiday decorations on the ship is something that hadn't been done for more than 10 years, but we were going to do it this year.

So we placed the order for everything and had it all on hand and ready to go by Friday, November 8th. With the supplies onboard to make the light strings we were set to have a very busy three Saturdays in November. As mentioned above the first thing that had to be done was hoist the signal flags on November 8th. That job went very well and we were able to get flags hoisted on both wires by mid afternoon, including a lunch break. For the next Saturday, November 15th, we had a very ambitious plan. We were going to bring down and store all of the signal flags, make and test the strings of holiday lights and then hoist them on the fore and aft wires. Lowering the flags went smoothly, and while that was going on a second team was in the wardroom attaching the stringers and sockets to a new carrier line, screwing in the 664 colored LED bulbs, and then testing the strings. The forward light string was 390', and the aft string was 440', so making the strings was a very time consuming job but we had enough people to setup an assembly line process and got it all done. By about 3:30 that afternoon we had all the flags stowed and strings of colored lights hoisted on the fore and aft wires.

Next came Saturday number 3, November 15th, the day we scheduled to decorate the discone antenna. This operation went smoothly too and by mid-afternoon we were once again done with the days planned activities. The amount of work done on those three consecutive Saturdays was amazing, it all went smoothly and now we get to enjoy the sight of the ship decorated for the holidays. The next shift will occur on the first Saturday in January when we'll haul down the holiday lights and replace them with white lights which will then stay up on the lines until the next time we want to raise the flags.

So the fundraiser not only gave us money to buy the two sets of Signal Flags, but it also allowed us to by

LED bulbs and wires so we can have a colored holiday light display now and then white lighting on the wires the rest of the year. Once again thanks to everyone who donated, I hope you are happy with how we used your funds.

In closing I'd like to thank the members of the Radio Club, members of the Brass Team, other ships volunteers and especially Phil Rowan for their support on this effort. We've come a long way this year in our capabilities to dress the ship and with what were able to purchase we will be able to continue to dress ship for many years to come. Below are some photos from those three Saturdays in November for your enjoyment. Hope everyone has a Great Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Flags hoisted on the forward wire,
we're getting pretty good at this part.

Another shot of the flags on the forward wire.

Shot from the pier, note the nice new paint job on the hull, she looks great!

Shot looking forward from the O5 level, looking good and ready for the ceremonies on the forecastle for Veterans Day!

Shot of flags on the aft wire, high over the aft stack, the aft main battery director and aft secondary battery director. Mission accomplished for the first Saturday!

On the morning of the second Saturday we had a team in the wardroom assembling and testing the light strings.

These guys are getting suited up to go up on the O11 level to help lower the flags and hoist the holiday lights on the wire.

Here is the result of the days work on the second Saturday, the flags are down and the holiday lights are hoisted on the fore and aft wires.

The view from the pier, mission accomplished for the second Saturday!

On the morning of the third Saturday the guys are preparing the light strings that will decorate the discone antenna.

Here we see a brave soul who made the climb to the top of the antenna mast to hang the light strings that will make the antenna look like a Christmas tree. He told me later that climb was something he could cross off of his bucket list.

All done with the antenna, couldn't wait to see how it looked at night.

Here is the tree with the lights just coming on as dusk settles in. Mission accomplished for the third Saturday!

Here we see the tree and the lights on the forward string.

Shot from O5 looking down at the tree and colored lights on the forward wire, great view!

A shot of the bow from the pier, looking good!

A shot from the promenade, the photos just don't do it justice...

Great job, thanks to everyone who came out over the past three Saturdays, she looks awesome!

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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Thanksgiving Dinner on the Battleship New Jersey

Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer

Once again this year the Battleship New Jersey, in partnership with the Camden County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the Camden County Office of Veterans Affairs, offered homeless veterans and active military personnel from Joint Base Ft. Dix and Dover Air Force Base a full-course turkey dinner on Thanksgiving. Our guests began arriving on the pier at about 10:30 am. Following a short presentation (approximately 20 minutes) on the fantail they were led down to the chowline where dinner was served. They were served by volunteers in the chowline and then enjoyed their meal in the crew's mess. Following the meal the ship was open for self-guided tours for our guests.

Many local residents joined Battleship staff and volunteers on the pier to welcome our heroes. There was

also entertainment on the pier by the Original Trilby String Band, hot chocolate and coffee was supplied by the county's Canteen food truck, and there were even some subs from Jersey Mike's Subs!

Thanks to all of our partners, volunteers, greeters, Camden County Police Officers, dignitaries, Andreotti's Caterers, our event host, the Spevak Family, and everyone else who made this Thanksgiving Dinner for the troops and transitional veterans on the Battleship a success!

Most importantly, thanks to our military and veterans for their service to our country.

Shot of the Memorial Pier lined with flags and people waiting to greet the guests coming to the ship for Thanksgiving dinner.

Guests arriving and making their way down the pier. (Photo 1)

Guests arriving and making their way down the pier. (Photo 2)

Guests arriving and making their way down the pier. (Photo 3)

Volunteers onboard in the Galley preparing food for the guests.

More volunteers man the serving line, everything looks ready to go.

Dinner is served, hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Dinner for two, coming right up.

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Battleship New Jersey Cookbook in the Works

Donna Klees, Retail Manager for the Battleship New Jersey and Memorial

Over the course of USS New Jersey's four commissions (WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and in the 1980s), she visited ports in every corner of the world. On liberty, her sailors had the opportunity to experience a wide variety of foods from around the world (from mundane to exotic). Some visited interesting restaurants, and others may have been fortunate enough to enjoy home-cooked meals in some of the locales.

Research is underway to capture in cookbook form the favorite foods experienced by our sailors on liberty in the Pacific, Mediterranean, Caribbean, and countless other ports of call. If you have anecdotes or stories to share about your dining experience or would like to submit a recipe for a memorable food that you were introduced to during liberty, we would like to hear about it. If you particularly enjoyed the cuisine of a restaurant visited during liberty, that would be of interest to us as well.

Our hope is to have our new cookbook ready by spring for sale in the Battleshop and online. Please contact Donna Klees, Retail Manager for Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial, at (856) 966-1652 or *d.klees@battleshipnewjersey.org*, to submit information or to obtain additional information about the project.

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Obituary for Navy Tradition, 1775 - 2013

Reprint of a Letter to the Navy Times by Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Sousa (USN Ret.) October 2013

In a press release from Washington D.C., the Navy Department announced the death of Navy Tradition after a long illness. Navy Tradition was born into a world of turmoil and revolution in 1775. Starting with nothing as a child, Navy Tradition evolved to become an essential part of the most powerful Navy the

world had ever seen. He was present when James Lawrence ordered "Don't give up the ship" as he lay mortally wounded on the deck of the Chesapeake. He witnessed cannon balls bouncing off the copper-shielded sides of the USS Constitution, "Old Ironsides." He fought pirates off the Barbary Coast and suffered with his shipmates on the battleship Arizona during the attack at Pearl Harbor. He fought his way across the Pacific with Nimitz and saw MacArthur fulfill his promise to return to the Philippines. Navy Tradition was there when sailors fought bravely to save the frigate Stark after it was hit by a cruise missile and witnessed the launch of Tomahawk missiles from the battleship Missouri at the outset of Desert Storm.

Through all the strife, good times and bad, Navy Tradition was there to support his shipmates and give a balance to the misery that sometimes accompanied a life at sea. Be the nation at peace or at war, Navy Tradition made sure that we always remembered we were sailors. He made sure that promotions were celebrated with an appropriate "wetting down"; crows, dolphins and wings were tacked on as a sign of respect from those already so celebrated; chiefs were promoted in solemn ceremony after being "initiated" by their fellow brethren; and only those worthy were allowed to earn the title "shellback." But in his later years, Navy Tradition was unable to fight the cancer of political correctness. He tired as his beloved Navy went from providing rations of rum to its sailors to conducting Breathalyzer tests on the brow. He weakened as he saw "Going into harm's way" turn into "Cover your backside," and as "Wooden ships and iron men" morphed into "U.S. Navy, Inc."

A lifelong friend of Navy Tradition recalled a crossing-the-equator ceremony during World War II: " I had to eat a cherry out of the belly button of the fattest sailor on the ship. It was disgusting. But for that few minutes, it took our minds off the war and to this day it is one of my greatest memories." In lieu of flowers, the family of Navy Tradition has asked that all sailors who have earned their shellback and drunk their dolphins; who remember sore arms from where their crows were tacked on and were sent on a search for "relative bearing grease" or a length of "water line"; who've been through chiefs' initiation or answered ship's call in a bar fight in some exotic port of call, to raise a toast one more time and remember Navy Tradition in his youth and grandeur. Fair winds and following seas, Shipmate. You will be missed.

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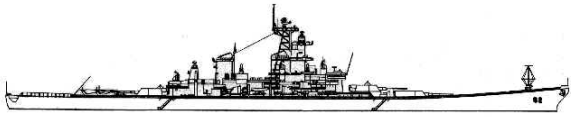

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